

DDI- 5617/82

8 JUL 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence
Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM: [REDACTED]
Chairman, Political-Military Advisory Panel

SUBJECT: Report on 10-11 June 1982 Meeting of PMAP

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Four members of the PMAP—Messrs. [REDACTED]—met at CIA Headquarters on 10-11 June to consider several topics summarized below and detailed at Tabs A through C. Attendance was limited owing to scheduling difficulties, indicating the importance of planning full meetings far in advance.

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1. As requested, the members reviewed the DDI's current production plan and the NIC's program for estimates. The group concluded that it is unable to give adequate advice on these plans as resource management tools. It proposes that more useful service could be rendered by reviewing the design, conduct, and findings of major analyses and estimates of a political-military character. Insufficient time was available for organizing such reviews at this meeting. (TAB A)
2. The panel members discussed the on-going war in Lebanon at some length with DDI and NIC personnel. There was a rough consensus among us that: a) Israeli forces will remain in Lebanon for a considerable time, b) both the US and the USSR were showing themselves relatively impotent in influencing the crisis, and c) as of 11 June it appeared that Soviet interests would suffer significantly greater damage than those of the US, at least in the short and medium term, barring some new Soviet action. The members differed sharply as to their prediction of likely Soviet responses. (TAB B)
3. At the request of D/NESA, the panel members met with DDI and DDO personnel to examine ways in which Soviet political action efforts in Iran could be better understood. It was judged that the Soviets are probably now engaged in a broad and long-term effort to build political influence mechanisms inside Iran after a period in which they may have expected more rapid development of the Iranian revolution from Islamic into leftist directions. Some methodological and topical suggestions for working this problem

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were made by the panel members. It is proposed that a specific interdirectorate project be organized on this subject, which panel members may advise from time to time over the next several months. (TAB C)



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Attachments:
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TAB A: Production Plan Review

At the request of the DDI and the C/NIC the panel members spent several hours reviewing the DDI production plan and the NIC estimates schedule. This led to the following main observations from some or all of the participating members:

- o Taken together these two production plans represent a broad and fairly inclusive statement of the analytic priorities and requirements of the DCI as seen by his directly controlled analytical assets. On the whole the panel members found little to quarrel with as regards these priorities. At the highest level of aggregation, for example, the panel thought [redacted] more attention among Latin American topics, and were told that it would, in fact, when necessary talents were assembled. One member suggested that DDI priority #12, industrial competitiveness, might be dropped at [redacted] as not exercising the comparative advantage of the Intelligence Community. We were told that this is a special concern of the DCI and the Administration which the Department of Commerce will not or cannot analyze.
- o We noted that the structure of themes and projects in the DDI seemed to reflect an intention under the old DDI organization to get cross-office cooperation in regional topics. Under the present regional organization of the DDI, cross-regional analysis may suffer. For example, East Europe is now coupled with West Europe and, although the problems posed by East Europe for the USSR are a major DDI theme, we note little attention to the subject of Soviet policy toward East Europe.
- o We were told, and some of us know from experience, that plans such as these are very hard to make prescriptive or even reasonably descriptive of the future because all manner of things intervene to force resources onto other, usually time urgent topics. Some of us felt, however, that these plans, as broad descriptions of what the analytical staffs ought to be working on, coupled with reasoned statements of manpower requirements, could be used to develop the case for analysis personnel additions.
- o The panel members felt uniformly that our backgrounds and roles made it much more appropriate for us to offer counsel on the substance of major projects and groups of projects, rather than on macro-management. Here two suggestions are offered: First, we could help design clusters of projects intended as building blocks toward larger thematic goals. Here the help would be methodological. Second, the panel (or selected members) could assist in a running critique of

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projects in areas likely to prove controversial as findings emerge. Here the help would be quality-control before the fact, and aid in defense of the work later on. We recalled that the MEAP had been helpful in both respects over the years. (The panel sought to arrange such project reviews for SOVA and NESA, but time was too short for this session.) The overall subject of the interrelationship of Soviet internal developments and Soviet external behavior would appear to be a good candidate in both respects.

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TAB B: Lebanon Crisis

Intermittently during the two-day meeting, and for the bulk of one afternoon, the panel members discussed the on-going crisis in Lebanon with NIC and DDI personnel. This discussion produced a number of observations about the crisis' future implications:

- , As of the middle of June the political consequences of the crisis remain extremely uncertain despite the unambiguous military victory of Israeli forces over the PLO and the Syrians. The political outcome remains to be determined by the development of an unusually large number of unusually uncertain variables.
 - The condition of the PLO as a political organization and the state of the Palestinian movement in general.
 - Reactions within Israel to the conflict and its costs; physical, political, and moral.
 - Impact on the Assad regime in Syria.
 - Arab reaction to the relative impotence of all actors other than Israel.
 - Possible shifts in US attitudes and behavior toward Israel.
 - Soviet reaction to another demonstration of the USSR's inability or unwillingness to help Middle East clients directly attacked by Israel.
- , Probable Soviet actions were the subject of lengthy discussion and sharp divergence of views. All agreed that the Soviets are, as of this moment, a major loser in the crisis. Its arms, training, political support, and resolve—and also the tactical responsiveness of its leadership—have all been shown to be deficient. This would seem to create an incentive on the Soviet's part for a series of military and political moves designed to recoup prestige and credibility. At one end of the spectrum of views, it was judged that the Soviets will do essentially nothing beyond declaratory posturing and resupply of Syrian materiel losses. At the other extreme, it was suggested that the Soviets would seek to establish a major military presence in Syria, perhaps on the order of their presence in Egypt in 1970-72, a dramatic political gesture whose risks would be reduced by cease fires. A third participant predicted a Soviet reaction somewhere between the two extremes. How, how fast, and why the Soviets react should in any case offer a meaningful gauge of how the Soviets perceive their interests and room for maneuver in the

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strategic environment of the early 1980s. This must receive the most careful analysis.

Subsequent to the panel meeting, as the Lebanon war continued, [] made the observation that, apart from Israeli arms, the big winner is likely to be the Khomeini brand of Islamic revolution, the one political force on the Muslim side of the equation that can take action and win wars.

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TAB C: Soviet Political Actions Options in Iran

At the request of the Director of NESAs, the panel members met with DDI and DDO personnel to consider ways we could improve our understanding of Soviet political action objectives and tactics in Iran. The following suggestions are intended for a sustained project by several analysts over the course of 3-4 months to examine this subject.

First, we must keep in mind that our understanding of current internal politics in Iran is shallow. The picture of the regime of mullahs steadily and despite all contrary earlier expectations consolidating itself is probably correct. But this situation is almost surely quite fragile even though potential opposition elements are finding it almost impossible to mount a concerted attack on the regime. The main danger to the Islamic revolutionary government would still appear to be an outbreak of severe factionalism among the ruling clerics following Khomeini's death, allowing even disorganized opposition to be more effective and perhaps increasing the chances that a Khadafi-like figure emerges to form a regime less dependent on the mullahs.

From this assessment we derive two important conclusions: 1) Increasing our knowledge about Iran's internal politics through improved collection and analysis has to be a top priority; 2) the Soviets, although probably supplied with more voluminous and detailed information, probably perceive the same fragile and confused Iranian picture, with an enduring Islamic regime the most probable future, but dramatic alternatives still possible.

Without question, improving relations with and influence in Iran has become a paramount objective of Soviet policy in the region. In the first two years after the Shah's fall, the Soviets probably expected a faster and more steady drift of Iranian politics to the left. They now must bet predominantly, but not exclusively, on the endurance of the Islamic regime. Their political objectives can be reasonably inferred:

- o Encouragement of anti-US and anti-Western attitudes.
- o Promotion of "normal" relations between Iran and the USSR in diplomatic, economic, and military areas.
- o Containment where possible of anti-Soviet actions, e.g., respecting Afghanistan.
- o Avoidance of pretexts for further suppression of Tudeh.
- o Development of bases and agents of political influence throughout the spectrum of Iranian politics wherever they can.

The question before us is how they are likely to pursue the last objective.

The mullah establishment itself is probably a Soviet target for penetration, albeit a most difficult one. Because the mullahs inside Iran and the Khomeini entourage during his exile represented threats to the Shah, the Soviets probably sought to infiltrate them in the past, with unknown success. Avenues for influence with this group today might

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include the merchant class of the bazaar, students who have gone Islamic, and Shiites outside Iran.

A whole class of targets would presumably be found among junior members of the technical and professional elites on whom the mullahs must rely as they seek to build a lasting and competent government. It would seem appropriate to Soviet longer-range goals to assemble a stable of agents from this class of people while they are "down-and-out." The junior members of the armed forces would seem to be particularly important targets.

Minorities, especially those represented on the Soviet side of the border, are probably the most readily accessible instruments of influence to the Soviets. They are likely, however, to be the least effective with respect to power centers in Tehran, for now at least.

For now one would expect that the Soviets are trying to work through minorities, especially Azerbaijanis, and "sanitized" Tudeh affiliates. We are inclined to believe that the Soviets are being very cautious about working with assets whose discovery would lead fairly directly to anti-Soviet or anti-Tudeh reactions by the regime.

These obvious and general "first principles" do not lead to sudden new insight into Soviet tactics in Iran, so far as we can see. At best they may guide a dogged effort to build up understanding of the problem through detailed collection and analysis.

We repeat the previous admonition to assign a high priority to collection and analysis on Iranian internal developments in general. It is high time to review the pattern of US policies and contacts toward Iran that have constrained our information and influence since the hostage crisis. Both from an intelligence and a policy perspective, the US appears to be giving the Soviets an uncontested advantage in Iran.

Further, we suggest several specific projects of analysis, all of which involve shaking out old sources and archives:

1. Perhaps through exploiting old Savak and other sources from the Shah's day, we can construct some sort of base line on Soviet influence and access in Iran at the time of the revolution, and to judge what happened to that base line subsequently.
2. Although they differ in important respects from the Iranian case, two earlier cases of Soviet covert operations to influence an evolving Third World political revolution are presented by Egypt and Indonesia, where subsequent developments allow access to sensitive data. An attempt should be made to conduct these case studies.
3. Soviet propaganda, press, broadcast, and scholarly material should be studied for insight into the level of knowledge and sophistication they reveal on the part of Soviet authorities. Much of this material is now being studied, we presume, but more with a view to gauging the current Soviet line.
4. A systematic effort ought to be made to construct a "who's who" of Soviet officials, diplomats, intelligence officers,

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military personnel, and academics who would constitute the Soviet pool of expertise on Iran. This directory—constructed, for example, from Soviet scholarly publications and diplomatic lists—could be of help in collection as well as tracking sources of influence on Soviet assessments and policies.

Selected members of the panel are available to counsel on the conduct of these projects and on the future steps that are suggested by their results.

A more fundamental policy question about Iran deserves to be raised: How can we track, much less influence, political events in Iran given our current estrangement from that country? Notwithstanding the risks in terms of our relations with other states in the Gulf and the prospect of very tough going at best, the USG should try (or try more energetically) to build contacts of many sorts with Iran, first through third parties and then more directly. This could be done without appearing to seek a degree of amity in US-Iranian relations that is likely to be impossible for many years.

One of the arguments for such an effort relates directly to our concern about Soviet influence there. Not only are we more or less gratuitously giving the Soviets an uncontested run at Iran, it seems likely that we are communicating to the Soviets by our behavior that we have already in some sense conceded Iran to the Soviet sphere of influence in the long term. Their task is merely to pocket their winnings through patient political actions. Although no analogy can be exact, the Soviets may see their prospects in Iran as rather similar to those they developed over many years in Afghanistan. They cannot be confused about the much greater importance of Iran to the US. But they thought probably throughout the 1950s and 1960s that the US, and its allies, should in their own interests have been paying much greater attention to Afghanistan. Now, despite our pronouncements on Persian Gulf security, they observe that we are not actually doing much to influence the future of Iran so vital to that concern. The manner in which we are actually deploying our political resources and military efforts may suggest to them a not-too-painful division of the region in which we continue to dominate on the peninsula, while they consolidate influence in Syria, Iraq, and Iran over the long term.

It may be worth a special study of the evolving pattern of events since say early 1978, and of the Soviet perception of them to determine whether such a Soviet appreciation could be arising.

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